

CHAPTER SEVEN

Preparing for the Hunt and Outdoor Safety

Introduction

Long before the hunting season arrives, you should start preparing yourself for the hunt. Preparation is one of the most important steps in making sure you have a safe and enjoyable hunting experience. A properly prepared hunter is less likely to get lost or have an accident, and in the event of either, is more likely to survive.

Preparation takes work and time. But it can be a fun part of the hunting experience. Being prepared is your responsibility — no one can do it for you and there is no substitute.

Your first consideration in preparing for your hunt is evaluating — or improving — your level of physical fitness. Your physical fitness will determine what kind of hunting you can do. You must then find out where you can hunt safely and legally. You might then engage in a bit of pre-season scouting, formulate a hunting plan, and put together a survival kit. Clothing selection is also important. Finally, learning basic First Aid, knowing what to do in extreme conditions or around water, and understanding how to survive if you get lost are all important components of preparation and outdoor safety.

A. What is physical fitness?

Physical fitness is an important factor in determining both the type of hunting you plan to do and the location you plan to hunt. Never hunt in conditions beyond your physical abilities. Hunting requires energy, strength and endurance. If you are fit and don't have any medical problems you should be able to handle it. Exercise on a regular basis before you hunt to condition your body. Don't put it off until the last minute!

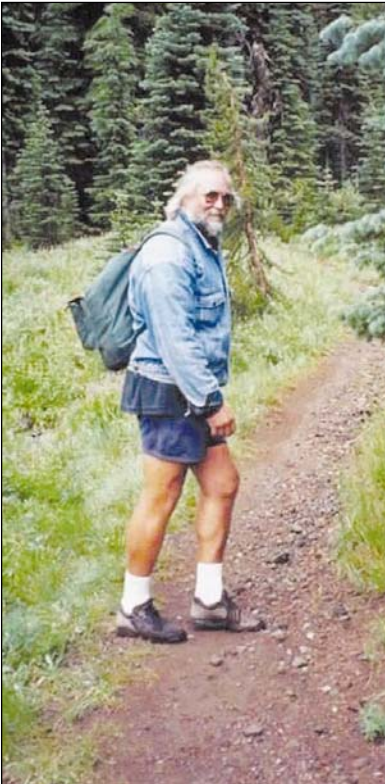
Key Words

Physical fitness	Scouting	3 C's
Public land	First aid	Hypothermia
Private land	CPR	S.T.O.P.
Field notebook		

Learning Objectives

At the end of this chapter, you will be able to:

- Explain the importance of physical fitness.
- List some general guidelines for hunting on public and private land.
- Explain why scouting is important and the purpose of a field notebook.
- List three pieces of information you should include in a hunting plan.
- Explain the importance of dressing in layers.
- List five essential items to bring along on any hunt.
- Explain the meaning of "check, call, care."
- List two factors that increase the possibility for hypothermia, frostbite and heat exhaustion.
- Explain what S.T.O.P. means
- Explain why water safety is important to hunters.



Why be fit before you hunt?

There are many reasons for maintaining your physical fitness. Here are four reasons why it is important to be in good condition before taking to the field:

- 🦌 If you are physically fit you can walk faster and farther. You'll cover more of your hunting area and have access to more remote sites.
- 🦌 If you are physically fit you can avoid exhaustion and dangerous lapses of concentration. Being alert and focused helps you to avoid accidents, may keep you from getting lost, and allows you to pay more attention to firearm safety and shooting skills.
- 🦌 Being physically fit can also improve your marksmanship. Remember: One of the keys to accuracy is breathing control. If you are out of breath and breathing heavily, your chest is heaving. If your chest is moving, you cannot hold your firearm steady.
- 🦌 If you must pursue or track a wounded animal, you will be more successful if you are fit.

B. Where can I hunt?

Your hunt may take you on public or private land. **Public land** is land that is owned by the federal, state or local government. Generally, the public has access to this land without special permission. **Private land** is land that is owned by an individual or a business. To use or enter private land, you must ask permission. Generally, the rules of conduct remain the same for each, but there are certain rules and laws that are specific to each. Know them before you hunt! To find out which rules apply to which areas, get a copy of Montana's current hunting regulations. Study the regulations for any changes or new rules and be sure you understand the seasons and bag limits for the area and game you are planning to hunt. If you need help, call your regional Fish, Wildlife & Parks office. There is a list of offices inside the back cover.

If you plan to hunt on private land

- 🦌 Get permission from the landowner well before the day you want to hunt.
- 🦌 Confirm with the landowner the date and time you will be hunting every time you hunt.
- 🦌 Stop by when you leave to let the landowner know you made it back safely. Offer to share your game.
- 🦌 Send a thank you note afterwards.
- 🦌 Always clean up your trash, including any flagging and empty shells.
- 🦌 Always follow the landowners' instructions. There may be restrictions on where and when they want you to hunt.

- 🦋 Never shoot around houses, buildings or livestock.
- 🦋 Leave gates as you find them.
- 🦋 Report any acts of vandalism or unusual situations.

If you plan to hunt on public lands

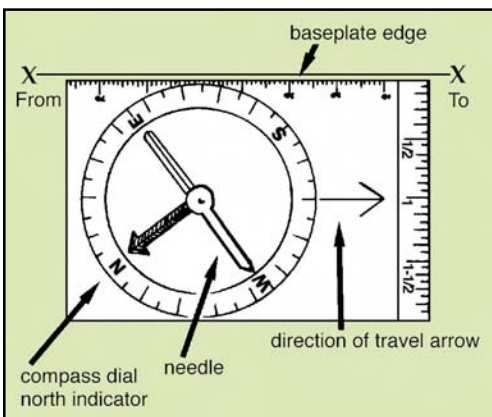
- 🦋 Know which government agency manages the property and get a map of the area.
- 🦋 Check the regulations to be sure that hunting is permitted, and that there are no special restrictions.
- 🦋 Be aware that most public lands are open to everyone, not just hunters. You may encounter hikers, bird-watchers or other people in the field. Treat everyone you meet with courtesy and respect.
- 🦋 Don't hunt near heavily used recreation areas such as campgrounds, buildings and trailheads for safety reasons and out of courtesy to others.
- 🦋 Always clean up your trash, including any flagging and empty shells.
- 🦋 Never shoot around houses, buildings or livestock.
- 🦋 Leave gates as you find them.
- 🦋 Report any acts of vandalism or unusual situations.
- 🦋 Take care to avoid spreading weeds.

C. Scouting

After you have determined your level of physical fitness and decided what you want to hunt and where you will go, it is time to do some pre-season scouting. The term **scouting** refers to "checking out" the area you plan to hunt. It may include looking at maps and aerial photos, and it should definitely include hiking the area to see what the terrain is really like. During your scouting trip, you can identify good places to camp, locate rivers and streams and

check to make sure you can cross them safely. It is also very important to find out what the weather conditions are like during hunting season.

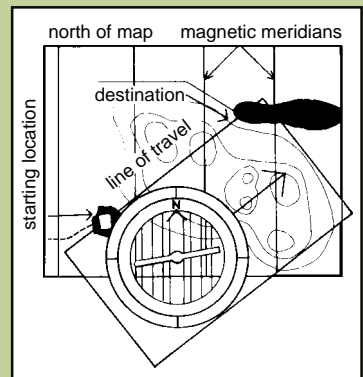
Scouting is great fun, and it will increase your chances of being successful in the actual hunt. Here are a few



A basic compass.

Using a Map and Compass

1. Mark your starting point and where you want to go on your topographic map. Draw a straight line between the two points.
2. Lay the baseplate edge of the compass along that line, with direction-of-travel arrow pointing in the direction you want to go.
3. Center the north arrow (the "N") of the compass dial along a meridian of the map — a north/south line.
4. Check the diagram at the bottom of the map that shows whether magnetic north is to the left or right of true north. Now turn the compass dial the correct number of degrees left or right as shown. You have now corrected for declination. The "N" is now pointing at magnetic north.
5. Hold the compass level out in front of you. Rotate your body until the red tip of the compass needle lines up with the compass dial "N." The direction of travel arrow now points in the direction you want to go.



things to remember when scouting:

- 🦌 Always ask for permission before entering private property.
- 🦌 Conduct your scouting just like you would a hunt.
- 🦌 Watch where animals go, and note when they go there.
- 🦌 Look for animal sign such as tracks, trails, droppings, rubs and scrapes.
- 🦌 Watch for other animals that use your hunt area. Other animals may give you clues to where game animals are located.

Remember: Birds and animals may not use the same area throughout the year. They may live in one area in summer and a different one in winter. Look for their migration routes or trails.

The field notebook

To be most successful, you should use a **field notebook** to record things you see and hear when you scout. By the time you finish scouting, your field notes should include:

- 🦌 Hunting routes traced out on a map.
- 🦌 Contact names and telephone numbers.
- 🦌 Camping areas.
- 🦌 Locations of fresh water supply.
- 🦌 Strategies for hunting the area at different times of the day.
- 🦌 Notes on key areas to hunt.
- 🦌 Equipment and gear lists to fit the area and conditions.

This written log can be worth its weight in gold when it comes time for the hunt. It can also help you to remember important details if you hunt the same area again in the future.

D. Why do I need a plan?

There are many benefits to planning your hunting trip. Planning increases your chances of having an enjoyable and successful outing, and, if you do it with your friends and hunting partners, it can also build excitement. But perhaps most importantly, a hunting plan could save your life. Here are a few more reasons why it is important to prepare a hunting plan:

- 🦌 If someone in your family back home had an emergency while you were hunting, a person would know where to start looking for you.
- 🦌 If you or a hunting partner were injured while hunting and did not show up when you said you would, your family or the authorities would know where to look for you.



Create a hunting plan.

- 🦌 If you were already in the field and friends decided to hunt the same area, they would know where you were so they could avoid disturbing your hunt.

Your hunting plan should contain all the information necessary to help someone find you in case of an emergency. Start with the “3W’s”:

Where are you going?

- Highlight an area on a map, or draw a map of your own.
- Be specific about your location.
- Notify someone if you change your plans while in the field.

Who is with you?

- List the names of the people you are with.
- List their contact information (phone numbers, addresses, etc.).

When are you returning?

- Be specific (e.g. I’ll be back at the house by 8:00 pm on the 19th.)
- Allow for delays.
- Set “alarm” times. Tell your family or friends how long they should wait before taking action to find you. It is very important that you call someone if you change your plans and are going to be late.

Where
Who
When

Review your hunting plan carefully and often. Add information as you have new ideas and eliminate things that are unnecessary or no longer relevant. As the time for your hunt approaches, finalize your plan. Leave the trip plan with somebody you trust and give them instructions on what they should do if you do not report back in time.

If you have done a good job of planning, it is likely that you will have a safe and enjoyable hunt. But the best plan is of no value if you do not stick to it! There is much truth in the old saying:

Plan your hunt and hunt your plan!

On the next page is an example for you to use when setting up your own trip plan.

E. What should I wear in the field?

The clothes you wear in the field are very important. They are not about fashion but about survival

Dress in Layers



Sample Trip Plan

Trip plan _____

Date & Time of Departure: _____

Date & Time of Return: _____

Destination: _____

Who will go along: _____

Vehicle Number and Description: _____

Cell phone #: _____

Landowner name and phone #: _____

Route Taken: _____

Route Returning: _____

*Permits Required: _____

*Special Equipment Needs: _____

*Special Clothing Needs: _____

* optional

Note: If you travel to a remote hunt area, attach a detailed map with travel routes marked.

File the trip plan with one, preferably two, adult family members who will not be going with you.

and comfort. Dress appropriately and be prepared for a change in weather.

The best way to deal with extremes in weather is to dress in layers. The layer next to your skin should be a material, like polypropylene, that wicks away moisture if you begin to sweat. Keeping the cloth next to your skin dry is key to staying warm. The layers above that should be for insulation and warmth; they do this by trapping air. Wool or synthetic materials like fleece are best for this layer because these materials retain some warmth even when wet. The top layer should be some type of water-repellent and/or wind-resistant material. Cotton clothing won't

keep you warm if it gets wet, so be very careful about wearing denim jeans, cotton sweatshirts, and cotton socks when hunting. And be sure to bring along a warm hat!

F. Outdoor essentials: the rest of your gear

In addition to your firearm, ammunition and clothing, you'll also need a few other items in the field. Having the correct gear can make the difference between survival and death if things go wrong on your hunt. Always be prepared for the worst possible scenario.

Below is a list of essential items that you should carry with you on every hunt:

- 🦌 Map of the area and compass. **KNOW HOW TO USE THEM!**
- 🦌 Large orange-colored plastic bag—useful as an emergency shelter, signaling device or rain shelter.
- 🦌 Flashlight and spare batteries.
- 🦌 Extra food and water.
- 🦌 Extra clothing—rain and wind clothes, sweater and warm pants (NOT jeans!).
- 🦌 Sun protection—sunglasses, sunscreen, hat, long-sleeved shirt and pants.
- 🦌 Pocketknife.
- 🦌 Waterproof matches and/or a lighter.
- 🦌 Candles and/or firestarter (you should practice starting a fire in bad weather before you go out).
- 🦌 First aid kit. (Training is necessary to develop skills for proper first aid.)
- 🦌 Plastic whistle.
- 🦌 Water filter or purification tablets.
- 🦌 Medication (if needed).
- 🦌 Drinking container.
- 🦌 Nylon cord.
- 🦌 Signal mirror.
- 🦌 Plastic tarp/space blanket.

You can pack your kit in a belt pouch or fanny pack. NEVER head into the field without it. A survival kit left behind in the hunting camp or the vehicle doesn't do you or anyone else any good.



Carry your survival kit in a fanny pack.

The "Rule of 3's" We can survive for:



3 minutes without AIR
3 hours in severe weather without SHELTER
3 days without WATER
3 weeks without FOOD



Proper first-aid training requires several hours of expert instruction. All hunters should complete a Red Cross first-aid course that includes instruction for rescue breathing and other possible outdoor emergency needs.



Source: Ohio Division of Wildlife

G. First aid

Even when we are careful, an injury can occur while hunting. You should know what to do, and what not to do, in a medical emergency. Improper care can worsen the victim's condition.

First aid is the immediate and temporary treatment of injuries until a victim can receive proper medical attention. Everyone, especially hunters, should take a First Aid course. The American Red Cross and other community service organizations teach first aid classes regularly.

In order to give first aid, you must not only have skills but supplies. A good first-aid kit includes:

- latex gloves
- sterile gauze dressings
- roller bandages
- tape
- triangular bandages
- space blanket
- barrier for rescue breathing in CPR
- maintenance medications
- first-aid book



Mild bleeding or fractures are usually not life threatening. However, a person who is unconscious, who is not breathing or who has no heartbeat is at great risk of dying. Learn how to properly perform **CPR (cardio-pulmonary resuscitation)**. CPR is a combination of chest compressions and rescue breathing. A heart attack, or an injury that causes the heartbeat or breathing to stop, will require CPR. You can learn how to do CPR at your local Red Cross or other community service organization.

H. Extreme conditions

Extreme weather conditions can create dangerous situations for hunters. Proper precautions can greatly reduce your risk of injury or even death. Keep in mind that weather conditions can change quickly. Take appropriate clothing and equipment for the worst possible conditions.

Anytime first aid or CPR is needed you need to remember these three basic steps called the 3C's:

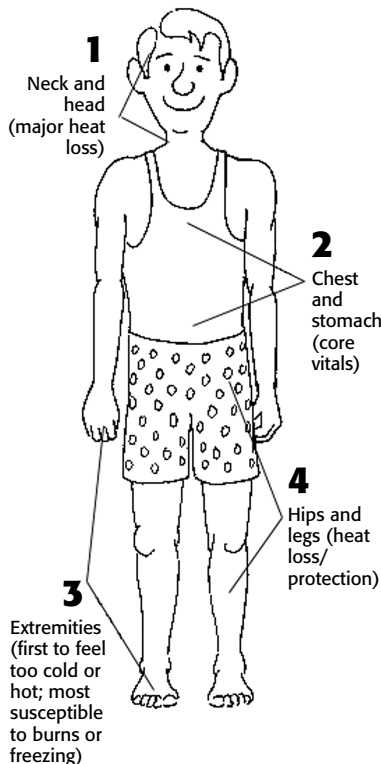
CHECK, CALL & CARE

- **CHECK** the area to be sure it is safe for you to attend the victim. **DO NOT** become a second victim! If it is safe, **CHECK** the victim to find out what happened and determine his or her condition.
- If possible, **CALL** for help. If you have a cell phone, use it. If you think there might be others within earshot, call out.
- After you have gotten help, you should **CARE** for the victim, using the skills you learned in a first-aid/CPR class and the supplies you have in your first-aid kit.

First Aid Emergency Measures

Injury	Signs	Treatment
Broken bones	Pain, tenderness, deformity, swelling and possible bleeding.	Control bleeding first; care for shock; keep broken bone ends and adjacent joints from moving.
Burns	Degree: 1st—skin is red. 2nd—skin is blistered. 3rd—skin is charred.	1st and 2nd degree with closed blisters—flush with cold water until pain stops, apply loose, moist dressing, treat for shock; 2nd degree with open blisters and 3rd degree—apply loose, dry dressing; treat for shock.
Cuts	Bleeding.	Apply pressure with a pad of clean cloth directly over the wound. For severe bleeding, elevate the wound above the heart level and apply direct pressure. If needed, apply pressure on nearest artery (the inner side of the arm between the shoulder and elbow, or the upper leg where it joins the body.)
Hypothermia	See box on page 79.	See box on page 79.
Frostbite	Skin color is white or grayish-yellow. Affected part may feel only very cold and numb. Skin surface will feel hard or crusty; underlying tissue soft when depressed.	Seek medical attention immediately. Do not rub affected areas. Warm gently by placing fingers or hands under arms or by holding affected areas in warm hands.
Object in eye	Local irritation, tearing and wetting.	Don't rub. Lift upper eyelid and flush with water. If unsuccessful, close both eyes and wrap with loose bandage. Get medical attention.
Shock	Pale, clammy skin; irregular breathing; fast, weak pulse.	Keep person lying down and maintain normal body temperature (98.6° F). Elevate feet. Do not give fluids if victim is unconscious. Begin CPR if needed. Get medical attention.
Sunburn	Red, painful skin and chills. Fever and shock occasionally accompany severe burns.	Apply cold water. Do not re-expose burned area to sun until completely healed. Get medical attention.
Heat Stroke	Hot skin. Victim does not sweat. High body temperature, rapid pulse and respirations, weakness, dizziness, headache. Unconsciousness.	Heat stroke is a true emergency. Move the victim to a cool place. Immediately cool the victim by any available means. Seek medical attention. Give water to hydrate. Put hands/wrists and feet/ankles in water to cool victim.
Heat Exhaustion	Heavy sweating, weakness, rapid pulse, normal body temperature, headache and dizziness, nausea and vomiting.	Move victim to a cool place. Keep the victim lying down with legs up. Cool by applying cold packs or wet towels. Fan the victim. Give cold water only if conscious. Seek medical attention.
Unconsciousness	Victim is not awake, does not respond to external stimuli.	Treat for shock. Turn head to side in case of vomiting. Stand by to give artificial respiration if breathing stops. Never give liquids or foods to an unconscious person. Get medical attention.
Insect Stings	<i>Usual reactions:</i> Momentary pain, redness around sting bite, itching, heat. <i>Worrisome reactions:</i> Skin flushes, hives, localized swelling of lips or tongue, "tickle" in throat, wheezing, abdominal cramps, diarrhea. <i>Life-threatening reactions:</i> Bluish or grayish skin color, seizures, unconsciousness, inability to breathe due to swelling of vocal cords.	Carefully examine the sting site for a stinger embedded in the skin. If the stinger is still embedded, remove it. Wash the sting site. Apply ice pack to slow absorption of venom and to relieve pain. Some type of analgesic (aspirin, acetaminophen) will help relieve pain, and a topical cream such as hydrocortisone may help combat local swelling and itching. Observe victim for at least 30 minutes for signs of allergic reaction.
Rescue Breathing/CPR	Take a Rescue Breathing/CPR course.	

Having the proper clothing can make the difference between a safe, enjoyable hunt and misery – or even death. Four basic areas for clothing are:



Hypothermia

One of the greatest risks for hunters is **hypothermia**. Hypothermia occurs when your body loses heat faster than it can produce it. If your body core temperature drops too much, your vital organs, especially your brain and heart, will stop functioning.

Hunters are at a greater risk for hypothermia when exposed to cold air or cold water. Hypothermia is especially likely when you combine wet clothing with cold, windy conditions.

The major factor is almost always inadequate or improper clothing. It is important to remember that hypothermia can occur at any time of the year, it doesn't have to be freezing; it can take effect in temperatures as warm as 50 degrees.



Getting soaked in driving rain can lead to hypothermia.

Hypothermia has been called "The killer of the unprepared." You can help prevent the onset of hypothermia by making sure you stay dry and protected from cool wind. If you are hiking and start to sweat, slow down and remove a layer of clothing. Be careful not to get wet if you cross a stream. Always take along a windproof, water-repellent outer layer to keep you dry if it rains or snows. And don't forget to wear a hat!

If you are shivering, you may be in the early stages of hypothermia. If you don't take steps to correct it, you may start shivering uncontrollably. Eventually, you will stop shivering altogether; you may become confused, disoriented and are likely to be unaware of what is happening to you. Victims who don't get help soon can lose consciousness and die.

It is extremely important to recognize the early signs of hypothermia in yourself and in others.

If someone with you shows signs of hypo-

Wind Chill Temperature Index

Temperature (°F)

Wind (m.p.h.)	Calm	40	35	30	25	20	15	10	5	0	-5	-10	-15	-20	-25	-30	-35	-40	-45
	5	36	31	25	19	13	7	1	-5	-11	-16	-22	-28	-34	-40	-46	-52	-57	-63
	10	34	27	21	15	9	3	-4	-10	-16	-22	-28	-35	-41	-47	-53	-59	-66	-72
	15	32	25	19	13	6	0	-7	-13	-19	-26	-32	-39	-45	-51	-58	-64	-71	-77
	20	30	24	17	11	4	-2	-9	-15	-22	-29	-35	-42	-48	-55	-61	-68	-74	-81
	25	29	23	16	9	3	-4	-11	-17	-24	-31	-37	-44	-51	-58	-64	-71	-78	-84
	30	28	22	15	8	1	-5	-12	-19	-26	-33	-39	-46	-53	-60	-67	-73	-80	-87
	35	28	21	14	7	0	-7	-14	-21	-27	-34	-41	-48	-55	-62	-69	-76	-82	-89
	40	27	20	13	6	-1	-8	-15	-22	-29	-36	-43	-50	-57	-64	-71	-78	-84	-91
	45	26	19	12	5	-2	-9	-16	-23	-30	-37	-44	-51	-58	-65	-72	-79	-86	-93
	50	26	19	12	4	-3	-10	-17	-24	-31	-38	-45	-52	-60	-67	-74	-81	-88	-95
	55	25	18	11	4	-3	-11	-18	-25	-32	-39	-46	-54	-61	-68	-75	-82	-89	-97
	60	25	17	10	3	-4	-11	-19	-26	-33	-40	-48	-55	-62	-69	-76	-84	-91	-98
FROSTBITE OCCURS IN:										30	10	5	minutes						
										minutes	minutes								

$$\text{Wind Chill (F)} = 35.74 + 0.6215T - 35.75(V^{0.16}) + 0.4275T(V^{0.16})$$

T = Air Temperature (F) V = Wind Speed (m.p.h.)

ermia, take the victim to a hospital as soon as possible. Act quickly. Don't wait to see if symptoms get worse. If medical attention is not nearby, you'll need to take action immediately to raise the victim's body temperature. Move the victim to a warm, sheltered place—out of the wind and rain. Remove any wet clothing and replace it with dry clothing. Somehow warm the victim. If a sleeping bag is available, put the victim inside it. Warm drinks (NO alcohol) can also help raise the body's temperature.

Frostbite

While hypothermia is a reduction of your overall body temperature, frostbite happens when your skin gets so cold it actually freezes. Exposed skin such as that on fingers, toes, ears, nose, and face is likely to suffer frostbite, especially in windy conditions. But even skin that's covered up can become frostbitten if it's cold enough. You can avoid frostbite by dressing properly or staying out of cold, windy weather. Frostbite may lead to the loss of skin and tissue.

Heat exhaustion

Heat exhaustion occurs when your body becomes overheated. Increased air temperature, poorly ventilated clothing, loss of body fluids, low physical fitness, or being overweight can cause heat exhaustion. If severe, death may occur from damage to vital organs.

Hypothermia

Symptoms	Treatment
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Feeling cold • Uncontrolled shivering • Slow, slurred speech • Muscles stiffening • Loss of hand coordination • Loss of memory • Drowsiness • Faulty judgment • Diminished reasoning 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Move to warm, sheltered area, out of wind and cold • Build a fire for warmth • Replace wet clothing with dry clothing or get in a dry sleeping bag • Use warm packs • Share body heat • Do not let victim fall asleep • If conscious, give victim warm, nonalcoholic drinks • Seek medical attention immediately

Frostbite

Symptoms	Treatment
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cold, flushed skin • Skin turns white or grayish yellow • Skin may be painful, but more often is numb and sometimes hard 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Move to warm, sheltered area, out of wind and cold • Build a fire for warmth • Replace wet clothing with dry clothing or get in a dry sleeping bag • Use warm packs • Do NOT rub or massage the affected part • Share body heat • Do not let victim fall asleep • If conscious, give victim warm, nonalcoholic drinks • Seek medical attention immediately

Heat Exhaustion

Symptoms	Treatment
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Muscle cramps • Headache • Dizziness • Fainting • Blurred vision • Vomiting • Skin may be flushed or pale • Dry, clammy skin • Intense thirst • Fast, shallow breathing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Move victim to cool, shady place • Apply cool, wet cloths • If conscious, give water to drink • Seek medical attention

		Relative Humidity (%)															
Air Temperature	F	40	45	50	55	60	65	70	75	80	85	90	95	100	Heat Index (Apparent Temperature)		
	110	136															
	108	130	137														
	106	124	130	137													
	104	119	124	131	137										Heat Index (Apparent Temperature)		
	102	114	119	124	130	137											
	100	109	114	118	124	129	136										
	98	105	109	113	117	123	128	131									
	96	101	104	108	112	116	121	126	132						Heat Index (Apparent Temperature)		
	94	97	100	104	106	110	114	119	124	129	135						
	92	94	96	99	101	105	108	112	116	121	126	131					
	90	91	93	95	97	100	103	106	109	113	117	122	127	132	Heat Index (Apparent Temperature)		
	88	88	89	91	93	95	98	100	103	106	110	113	117	121			
	86	85	87	88	89	91	93	95	97	100	102	106	108	112			
	84	83	84	85	86	88	89	90	92	94	96	98	100	103			
	82	81	82	83	84	84	85	86	88	89	90	91	93	95	Heat Index (Apparent Temperature)		
	80	80	81	81	82	82	83	84	84	85	86	86	87				

With Prolonged Exposure and/or Physical Activity

Extreme Danger

Heat stroke or sunstroke
highly likely.

Danger

Sunstroke, muscle cramps,
and/or heat exhaustion likely.

Extreme Caution

Sunstroke, muscle cramps,
and/or heat exhaustion possible.

Caution

Fatigue possible.

You can help prevent heat exhaustion by avoiding too much activity on hot days. Also, be sure to wear loose clothing and wear a hat when in the sun. Drink plenty of water even when you are not thirsty.

I. Oops, I'm lost!

It's getting dark. You're cold. You're wet. And you aren't sure where your hunting camp is. What do you do now?

The best way to survive a potentially dangerous situation is to avoid it. But any time a person is hunting, there is a chance that he or she may become lost especially when hunting in an unfamiliar area. If you don't feel comfortable hunting in an area, or if you feel unprepared, don't do it. Don't take the chance. As a rule of thumb: the greater the chance of becoming lost, the more detailed your preparation needs to be.

**Even the best hunter can get lost.
But the best hunter doesn't stay lost for long.**

If you are lost or injured while hunting, admit you are lost or injured. Remember S.T.O.P.



S = Sit
T = Think
O = Observe
P = Plan

S.T.O.P. means **SIT** down and try not to panic. Being calm helps you to **THINK** more clearly about your situation. Are you really lost? If you are, then accept that fact. **OBSERVE** the area around you. Do you recognize any landmarks that might help you find your way out? **PLAN** what you should do next. Should you find some sort of shelter, find something to eat or try to signal for help? By following these steps, you are more able to evaluate your situation realistically, and being realistic about your situation increases your chances of getting out of it.

Dealing with fear. Fear is a normal reaction to being lost; everyone feels afraid when they are lost. But fear affects the way you

behave and, if not overcome, can become your greatest obstacle to surviving. By admitting that you are lost, you will know to follow the steps outlined below. If you follow the steps below you are less likely to make mistakes that could worsen your situation.

1. Wait for help. Wandering through the woods trying to find your way back to camp will most likely result in being farther off course. If you have told your hunting partners where you will be going, they will be better able to find you if you stay where you are.
2. Before it gets dark, make preparations for an overnight camp. Start a campfire and build a shelter. Take inventory of your supplies and plan on how you will make the best use of each item. Plan on making your supplies last for three days.
3. Remember that the international signal for help is three of anything. Three loud blasts on a whistle will alert those within hearing distance of your need for help. The proper response when hearing this signal is two return whistle blasts.
4. Anyone going into the field should always carry a whistle for such emergencies. If for any reason you do not have a whistle, you may fire three shots from your firearm. (Most effective after legal shooting hours.) Use extreme care to be sure your shots are in a safe direction.
5. At night, three fires located in a triangle will give notice of your emergency. In daylight, a small mirror may be used to reflect the sun's rays and attract attention. You may also spell out "SOS" in snow or sand.

When you are hunting alone, or if all of your hunting party becomes lost, remember that you left a hunting plan with someone. When you don't return or call on time, they will start looking for you. This is why it is very important to closely follow your hunt plan. That way your rescuers will know where to search for you.

Starting a fire. Start a fire to stay warm, dry your clothes, cook food, and to signal for help. It isn't always easy to get a fire started. Practice starting fires under different conditions before you go hunting, and always carry at least three different methods for starting a fire. Don't wait until it's dark and you are cold

Seven Survival Rules

1. Tell someone where you are going and when you plan to return.
2. Try to hunt with someone else whenever possible.
3. Take enough food for several days in case of an emergency.
4. Take a compass and map and know how to use them.
5. Wear proper clothing and equipment.
6. Plan your hunt so that you will return before dark.
7. Carry a survival kit with shelter and fire starting materials.



A lean-to shelter.

Fire Materials

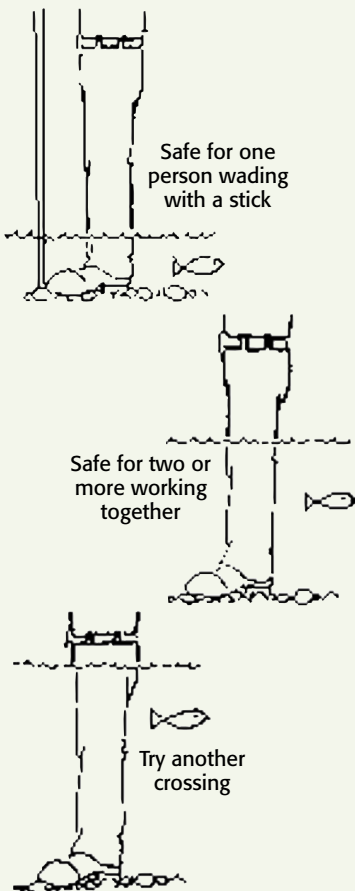
Fire starters	Tinder
1. Fine steel wool	1. Dry grass
2. Fuzzsticks	2. Bark
3. Candles	3. Dead pine needles
4. Paraffin-coated butcher's cord	4. Dry leaves
5. Kerosene-soaked sawdust	5. Wood shavings
6. Commercial chemical blocks	6. Twigs



Starting a fire.

Safety Around Running Water

- Study the creek before crossing. Walk along edge and look for best possible place to cross.
- Look for the wide, shallow areas, which are usually safest.
- Avoid the main current. Stay in slower moving water.
- If you can't see the bottom, it's probably too deep to wade.
- Watch for debris floating in the creek.
- Look for sand, gravel or cobble bottom.
- Look for gradual slopes to enter and exit (avoid cutbanks).



to start your fire. Gather plenty of wood and start your fire as soon as you decide you are spending the night in the field. But do so in a safe area and safe manner. Do not start a forest fire!

Many hunters have spent an unplanned night in the woods. It might not be pleasant, but if you are properly prepared it need not be life-threatening.

J. Water safety

Many hunters hunt around water. Water adds an extra element of danger to the hunting experience because it greatly increases the risk of hypothermia and drowning. **Learn to swim!**

A boat can help you get to an area that would be impossible to get to by foot. Before getting into your boat, put on a personal flotation device (PFD) also called a life jacket. Everyone in the boat must wear a PFD. If you should ever fall overboard, a PFD will keep you afloat until you reach safety. Always put your PFD on *before* you get in the boat and wait to take it off until *after* you're on dry land.

Never stand up in a boat. Any quick motion or wave could cause you to fall out of the boat. Load equipment and passengers evenly in the boat and do not overload the boat. And if you are hunting with dogs, be sure to keep control of them while in the boat.

If you plan on doing quite a bit of hunting around water, learn more about water safety and rescue techniques. Check your library for books on water safety, or ask your parents, teacher or Hunter Education instructor where you can find out more.

Proper preparation and knowledge of emergency measures could mean the difference between life and death.

Hypothermia Chart in Water

If the Water Temp. (F) is . . .	When Exhaustion or Unconsciousness Occurs	Expected Time of Survival is . . .
32.5°	Under 15 min.	Under 15-45 min.
32.5°-40°	15-30 min.	30-90 min.
40°-50°	30-60 min.	1-3 hrs.
50°-60°	1-2 hrs.	1-6 hrs.
60°-70°	2-7 hrs.	2-40 hrs.
70°-80°	3-12 hrs.	Indefinitely
over 80°	Indefinitely	Indefinitely

Cold water chills your body much faster than cold air. If you fall in the water, get out as quickly as possible. If your boat has capsized, crawl on top of it if you can.

Chapter Seven Quiz

1. List four things you can do to prepare for your hunt.

2. What information should you include on your hunting trip sheet or hunting plan?

3. With whom should you leave your trip plan?

4. What are the three "C's" for victim care?

5. What does S.T.O.P stand for?

6. In the following list, mark three items which are primary components of a survival kit.

- | | | |
|---------------|-----------------------|-----------------|
| A. Water | E. Safety glasses | I. Firestarter |
| B. Candy bars | F. Map | J. Matches |
| C. Compass | G. Drinking container | K. Soap |
| D. Nylon cord | H. Signalling mirror | L. Pocket knife |

7. List three reasons for making a trip plan.

1.

2.

3.
